

Exploring the impact of destination image and hotel brand attachment on revisit intention: Ho Chi Minh City case study

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ABSTRACT

In a world of uncertainty, the tourism industry has to confront several changes that significantly disturb the innovation and development of this field. Managers and marketers must estimate the appropriate strategy to encourage tourists to revisit the destination, especially after the Covid-19 pandemic. This study explores the role of destination image that combines hotel brand attachment to enhance the intention to revisit travelers. By adapting the S-O-R model and attachment theory, this study recognized the indispensability of hotel brands in tourist places, which could reinforce revisit intention. An empirical research was conducted to test the hypotheses based on the theoretical framework. This study utilized the PLS-SEM method to analyze 478 samples collected from primary data. Findings reveal that destination image, hotel brand attachment, and revisit intention correlate linearly in tourism. This study also proposes both practical contributions and theoretical building for further research.

1. Introduction

In addition to being a primary source of international exchange, the hospitality and tourism sector has grown to be a general sponsor of the general economic growth in many countries (Enzenbacher, 2019; Thrassou et al., 2014; Vrontis et al., 2016). As tourism is known as a global industry, it is influenced by various interconnected governmental decisions, cultural systems, and industries worldwide (Sigala, 2020). These factors significantly impact tourism since they add the sense of uncertainty, travel restrictions, more stringent economic calculations, and other factors to the decision of tourists to travel and the capacity of locations to accommodate them (Scott & Gössling, 2015; Timothy & Hall, 2019; Wilder-Smith, 2006). With about 18 million foreign and 85 million local visitors in 2019, Vietnam's tourism industry grew at one of the world's ten fastest rates (Travelmag, 2020). Vietnam's Minister of Culture, Sports, and Tourism highlighted that 2020 would be a significant opportunity and that the country would look to create 3.5 million tourism jobs in 2020 to lead economic growth and draw in 20.5 million foreign visitors (Nhat Nam, 2019). Remarkably, around 50% of Vietnam's foreign tourists and about 20% of its tourism-related income come from Ho Chi Minh City (Ho Chi Minh Tourism Department, 2020). However, Covid-19 has negatively affected almost all nations worldwide, resulting in deliberate financial action and limiting

tourism to slow the spread of the virus, except Vietnam (Bakar & Rosbi, 2020). Research must estimate this phenomenon to carry out reasonable approaches to help tourism destinations attract visitors.

Many studies have been conducted on destination image and hotel brand attachment. Several place-oriented and people-oriented notions have been developed by tourism research to explain why tourists visit, return, and are willing to return to a place; this phenomenon is commonly known as destination loyalty (Tasci, 2017). Numerous place-oriented factors, such as motivation, image, satisfaction, quality, value, involvement, commitment, novelty-seeking, risk perception, and destination attachment, have been examined in connection with destination loyalty to determine what makes or breaks it (Patwardhan et al., 2020; Stylos & Bellou, 2019; Tasci, 2017). Prior research has examined how locals perceive tourists and tourism in a variety of contexts, including stereotypes (Tung et al., 2019), destination perception (Stylidis et al., 2017), disputes between tourists and locals (Tsaour et al., 2018), and discrimination against tourists (Tse & Tung, 2020). Research has also examined the affective responses of locals to attachment to tourists (Ouyang et al., 2017) and emotional bonds (Woosnam & Norman, 2010). Hotel operating performance can be significantly enhanced by strengthening the bond between customers and a hotel brand. Marketing researchers have taken an interest in emotional attachment theory in marketing. Brand attachment represents the bond between a brand and its customers, while emotional attachment is not just a consumer's view but also the basis for their associations with particular products (Park et al., 2010). According to Park et al. (2013) and Japutra et al. (2019), promoting a strong brand connection can result in brand love and loyalty and is a key strategy for obtaining lucrative recurring business, including compulsive buying.

Although many studies have deeply investigated how destination image affects visitors' intention to revisit, the information was gathered and examined before the staggering global Covid-19 toll. As the virus began in the east and moved westward, unfavorable opinions and attitudes about particular locations and individuals from certain racial and cultural groups have developed. Previous research lacked measuring the model's predictive power on citizens' support for future place development and ability to serve as destination representatives (Styvén et al., 2020). Moreover, only two outcomes of travel motivation are explored, including destination image and visitors' attitude toward destination; other variables like destination loyalty and satisfaction should be considered in a similar context in future studies. The hotel's mediating effect in the destination image model remains underestimated. Previous research has indicated that customers could have multiple attachment patterns.

This study adapts the previous knowledge and findings with up-to-date data collected after the Covid-19 pandemic. This study also aims to build on these theoretical principles by using the destination image model to analyze the relationship between tourist stereotypes, locals' feelings, and behaviors, thereby improving understanding of intergroup interactions in accommodation relations. This study would be fascinating in investigating other hospitality and tourism areas, particularly from an emerging market perspective. Besides, this research also gathers more information from customers in nations with diverse cultural backgrounds. This study evaluates whether hotel forms mediate the relationship between perceived value and brand attachment (Huaman-Ramirez & Merunka, 2019). Based on the analysis above, this study focuses on answering research questions: (1) How does a traveler's perspective change

after Covid-19 that influences their revisit intention? (2) To what extent does hotel brand attachment impact revisit intentions? (3) How does a change in destination image dimension adapt to a new context of Ho Chi Minh City (HCMC)?

In summary, this study employs an empirical research method to evaluate the roles of destination image on revisit intention, particularly in the context of HCMC. Moreover, the theoretical building would be contributed by estimating the attachment of destination, hotel brand, and tourist. The mediating role of hotel attributions on the destination image concept is considered robust in this study. After data analysis, managerial and theoretical implications are carried out to support the tourism industry.

2. Theoretical basis

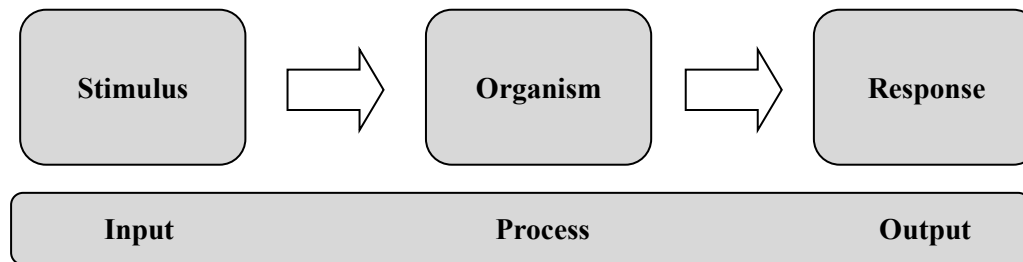
2.1. Theoretical background

2.1.1. Theory of S-O-R

S-O-R model indicated that people react to their surroundings through approach behaviors, which comprise optimistic activities such as exploration, desirability of staying, affiliating, or working, and behaviors to avert, which include the opposite, such as the desire not to act (Figure 1) positively. This theory also emphasizes the emotional aspects of the surroundings that are considered appealing stimulations (Wohlwill, 1976). Mehrabian and Russell (1974) concentrated solely on passionate reactions, whereas Bitner (1992) integrates physiology and cognition into the theory of S-O-R, broadening its application to servicescapes.

Recently, an integrative S-O-R framework with cognitive and affective systems was given, which includes all previous engaged experiences involving long-term memory (Jacoby, 2002). S-O-R theory was expanded to include internal (website quality) and external (reputation) sources of information as stimuli that influence purchase intention (response) via consumers' (organisms') cognition and emotion (Kim & Lennon, 2013). To fulfill the criteria for evaluating restaurant quality within the tourism sector, Jang and Namkung (2009) enhance the S-O-R model originally posited by Mehrabian and Russell (1974) by incorporating stimuli specific to restaurants and emotional metrics. Kim and Moon (2009) asserted that the servicescape significantly affects customers' positive and negative behavioral experiences through cognitive and affective mechanisms in a themed dining environment.

In the tourism industry, the S-O-R model demonstrates remarkable efficacy in elucidating the interrelationships between stimuli of hotel atmosphere, stimuli as emotions, and responses of hotel loyalty (Jani & Han, 2015). The S-O-R model posits that visual and verbal stimuli influence tourism inspiration, serving as provocations, while elucidating the correlation between the intention to travel and the subsequent actual visits as responses among individuals who attend movies (Rajaguru, 2013). As part of the S-O-R procedure, visitors are encouraged by destination images that are considered input to this formula Chang et al. (2013). After the stimulus stage, visitors attach themselves to the destination and other objects related to the place, such as hotels and restaurants. Finally, the output of reaction chains revisits the intention to this place that visitors have an emotional attachment to. In alignment with the existing literature, the present study formulates and empirically assesses the S-O-R model to forecast potential visitor behavior within the context of hotel brand attachment and destination attachment.

Figure 1*S-O-R Model Process*

Source. The data are from “An approach to environmental psychology” by A. Mehrabian and J. A. Russell, 1974, MIT Press

2.1.2. Attachment theory

Attachment is defined as the tendency of persons to create thoughtful emotional relations through specific characters and entities (Bowlby, 1977). Attachment theory has been employed by marketing scholars to examine consumer behavior (Escalas & Bettman, 2005; Park et al., 2010). Attachment in tourism refers to the emotional and positive bonds formed from personal connections to a destination (Ramkissoon, 2015), nurturing the visitor’s intention to return. Furthermore, assessing a place as interesting mediates the relationships between game enjoyment, social ties, and place attachment (Oleksy & Wnuk, 2017). Tourism destination in Marketing plays a pivotal role as a tourism brand that influences visitors’ behavior (Govers et al., 2007). Brand attachment fosters robust and constructive emotions for a brand, reflecting the buyer’s passion and spirit for it. Brand attachment is the power of the relationship between a person and a brand (Thomson et al., 2005). Brand attachment develops via long-standing interactions between brands and their consumers. It expresses the interaction between the inner self and brands. The better the bond, the steadier the association among consumers and brands (Park et al., 2010).

Brand loyalty refers to the connection among consumers with a particular brand and the emotions toward the brand, such as feelings (Thomson et al., 2005). These feelings reflect the impact of the self-brand relationship (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007). Consumers form long-term attachments to brands. This study developed attachment theory applications to support the stimulus step in the conceptual model.

2.1.3. Destination image concept

Studies on destination image have been conducted since the early 1970s, with Hunt’s (1982) important work on the function of tourism image development. Research on destination image is not limited to academics; it is also relevant to destination marketers (Baloglu & Brinberg, 1997). Crompton (1979) characterized destination image as the aggregate of cognitive beliefs and emotional perceptions that a person holds about a particular destination. In a similar vein, destination image is determined by individual perceptions that merge strong elements of cognitive (belief) and affective (emotion) (Baloglu & Brinberg, 1997; Beerli et al., 2002). Hunt (1982) described destination image as prospective travelers’ beliefs regarding a destination. According to these results, destination image is an evaluative attitudinal judgment of cognitive and emotional elements (Baloglu & MaCleary, 1999). Therefore, cognitive and affective aspects should be considered when evaluating the image area. Mental image is evaluated based on information and knowledge of the destination; affective response is measured based on the

tourist's feelings and emotions (Seo & Yun, 2015; Toudert & Bringas-Rábago, 2019). Destination image is considered a behavioral attribution that contributes a verbal signal regarding tourists' intention to visit the destination (Akdag et al., 2018).

Studies have shown a positive relationship between destination images and attachment to destination (Chiang, 2016; Jiang et al., 2017; Stylos et al., 2017). Woosnam and Norman (2010) stated that the emotional relationship could be shaped in tourists' affective responses during tourism trips, hence developing the attachment to the destination (Ouyang et al., 2017). Moreover, positive communication through the residents' manners could enhance the emotional attachment among visitors to the destination, thus increasing emotional attachment to the destination (Fan et al., 2017; Styliadis, 2020; Woosnam et al., 2020).

2.2. Conceptual framework and hypothesis development

2.2.1. Destination image and hotel brand attachment

Tourism-related attitudes and behaviors are impacted by destination image attributions that confirm or strengthen existing thoughts, develop new attitudes, or modify a current view or assertiveness (Kim & Richardson, 2003). According to Jalilvand et al. (2012), destination image has a favorable and substantial effect on tourist attitudes toward the tourist place. Moreover, Kim and Stepchenkova (2015) indicated that a site's organic image significantly affects tourists' perceptions. Cognitive image (quality experience) can improve the visual features of the place, such as providing pleasant and comfortable surroundings, preserving an attractive landscape, and maintaining a high standard of sanitation and cleanliness. Creating a calm and tranquil atmosphere, preserving the beauty of the state and its parks, and using visual media can enhance the attachment to the destination's things. Therefore, strengthening the destination image entirely is considered to improve the hotel brand's attachment. Based on the analysis, the hypotheses are proposed:

H1: Cognitive image has a positive impact on hotel brand attachment

H2: Affective image has a positive effect on hotel brand attachment

2.2.2. Destination image and destination attachment

The concept of destination image is possibly the most studied place-related concept because it affects the behavior of many people from different perspectives, such as residents, inbound tourism, and outbound tourism, in various ways (Govers et al., 2007; Tasci & Gartner, 2007). In tourism, the emotional bond with a destination (Liu, Hultman, et al., 2020; Ram et al., 2016) usually develops following a single visit; nonetheless, there are instances where individuals form attachments to locations they have never experienced before. Even though the cognitive destination image model is becoming increasingly popular, it is strongly argued that tourism destinations should not be viewed solely through mental images, as tourists may possess an emotional connection to specific places (Ward & Russell, 1981). Thus, we have proposed hypotheses:

H3: Cognitive image has a positive impact on destination attachment

H4: Affective image has a positive effect on destination attachment

2.2.3. The attachment to revisit intention

Brand attachment fosters a robust and optimistic feeling toward the hotel brand,

showcasing the consumer's eagerness and sentiments. Brand attachment is an emotion formed through prolonged engagement among customers and hotel brands. It conveys the relationship between the inner self and brands. According to Park et al. (2010), the stronger the connection, the stronger the link between the customer and the product. Therefore, attachment to the hotel brand should be considered to enhance the intention to visit.

H5: Hotel brand attachment has a positive impact on revisit intention

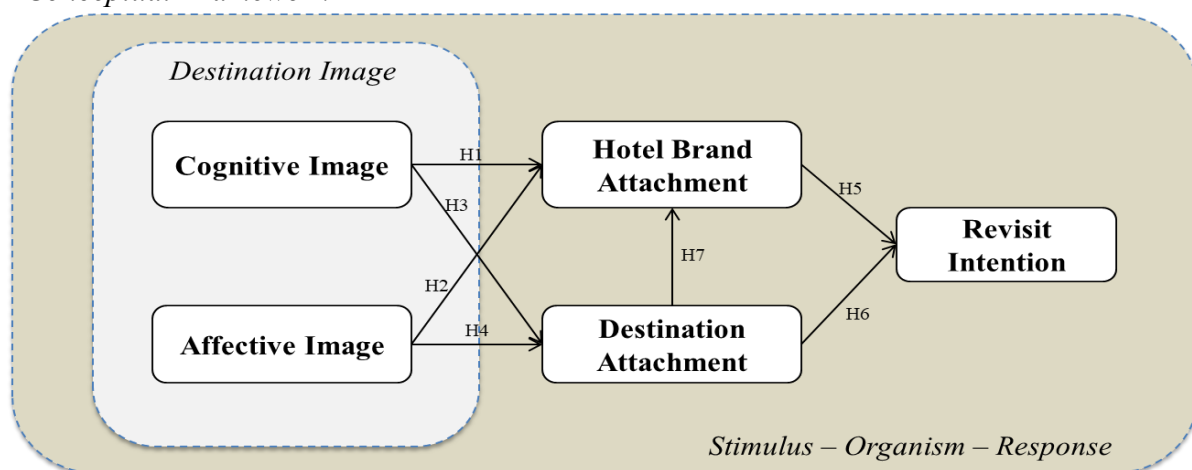
Place attachment is a critical factor in the development of destination loyalty, as it can comprehend the emotional bond that visitors form with a destination, increasing their purpose to return (Patwardhan et al., 2020; Stylos et al., 2017). This contrasts with the other antecedents of destination loyalty, like general satisfaction (Prayag & Ryan, 2012) and destination perception (Woosnam et al., 2020; Zhang et al., 2014). Understanding shows that attachment to a destination can influence the intention to return to this tourist place. Otherwise, an attachment to the destination could be considered a consumer's perceived value while visitors consume services at a tourist attraction (Liu, Kou, et al., 2020). Studies have shown that brand attachment relies on how much customers favor the product or services as a part of themselves (Park et al., 2006). Thus, visitors with a positive emotional relationship with a tourism destination could be attached to the hotel brand in the same place. Based on the analysis, the hypotheses are proposed:

H6: Destination attachment has a positive impact on revisit intention

H7: Destination attachment has a positive effect on hotel brand attachment

Figure 2

Conceptual Framework



Source. The authors

3. Methodology

3.1. Sample size

This study utilized a non-probability quota sampling method to collect the respondents, focusing on the locations of Ho Chi Minh City. The locations were chosen as the highest traffic areas of tourists in the city's right, including four famous tourist destinations: Saigon Notre Dame Cathedral, The Independent Palace, Ben Thanh Market, and Nguyen Hue walking street (Vietnam Travel, 2020). Based on the top attractive destinations, the self-administered questionnaire was allocated personally to the target population travelling and

enjoying tourist attractions for the last three months in 2024. Online and offline methods increased respondents' flexibility in completing the surveys. According to the pertinent research from the review of experts and previous literature, the questionnaire items in our survey were modified following the basic understanding to approach the variety of audiences. All the measurement scale information, including several items, sources, and coding, is represented in Appendix A (online version).

The questionnaire observations were mostly amended from Baloglu and MaCleary (1999), Fu et al. (2019), Liu, Hultman, et al. (2020), and Choo et al. (2016). Measurement scales utilized a Likert scale of 1-5, ranging from strongly disagree to agree strongly. A total of 478 valid samples were collected from online and offline sources that show a similar allocation of demographic features to this report, confirming our respondents' representativeness (Appendix B (online version)).

3.2. Measurement scale

To assess a reflective measured construct, the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) was employed as an ideal technology readiness for this study (Hair et al., 2017; Wong et al., 2015). This study exploited SmartPLS 3.0 software to accomplish the PLS-SEM method (Ringle et al., 2015). First, using the PLS algorithm to evaluate the measurement model with a maximum of 300 iterations and a stop criterion of 7. In this stage, the quality of measurement items, the measurement model's reliability, and validity are estimated. Next, the study developed the structural model evaluation using bootstrapping with a subsample of 5,000. VIF values were checked for collinearity and then used to test hypotheses. The explanatory and predictive power of the construct model was also analyzed. Lastly, additional analysis was conducted to evaluate the effects of mediation.

Before the analyses, the Common Method Bias (CMB) was assessed to gather answers for endogenous and exogenous constructs from similar samples via a mutual medium (Foo et al., 2018; Hew, 2017; Tehseen et al., 2017). Five conceptually vital constructs were conducted a Harmon one-factor test (Podsakoff & Organ, 1986). Testing results indicate that one component is 33.893%, which accounts for five factors, suggesting that CMB is not a likely pollutant of this research model.

4. Results

4.1. Measurement model evaluation

Regarding the measurement model, this study tests the reliability and validity of the results. Initially, Table 1 shows the adequate outer loading values of observations, with all the values greater than 0.7 (Hair et al., 2013). This means all the observations are significant in representing the latent constructs. Internal consistency reliability test also provides good indicators, with all Cronbach's Alpha values exceeding the threshold of 0.7. Moreover, Composite Reliability (CR) values range from 0.888 to 0.933, reaching the recommended reliability criteria (Hair et al., 2013). Thus, the measurement model meets all the reliability criteria for the subsequent analyses.

Table 1*Reliability and Convergent Validity Results*

Constructs	Items	Outer loading	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability (CR)	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Affection Image (AFE)	AFE1	0.823	0.834	0.889	0.666
	AFE2	0.802			
	AFE3	0.793			
	AFE4	0.845			
Cognitive Image (COG)	COG1	0.904	0.893	0.933	0.823
	COG2	0.901			
	COG3	0.916			
Destination Attachment (DIA)	DIA1	0.811	0.831	0.888	0.664
	DIA2	0.817			
	DIA3	0.792			
	DIA4	0.839			
Hotel Brand Attachment (HBA)	HBA1	0.829	0.890	0.924	0.753
	HBA2	0.896			
	HBA3	0.886			
	HBA4	0.857			
Revisit Intention (RE)	RE1	0.84	0.899	0.930	0.769
	RE2	0.828			
	RE3	0.928			
	RE4	0.908			

Source. The authors

To test the validity of the measurement model, this study attempts both convergent and discriminant validity outcomes. Table 1 provides the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values for convergent validity testing. Results show that all AVE values are also higher than 0.5, which means AVE indicators are acceptable (Hock & Ringle, 2010). To assess discriminant validity, the Fornell–Larcker criterion was employed. Table 2 shows the square root of the AVE of all constructs exceeding the construct's most significant association with any other construct in the model (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). However, in empirical research, studies usually fail to adapt the Fornell-Larcker criterion to reliably identify discriminant validity problems (Radomir & Moisescu, 2019).

Table 2*Fornell-Larcker Criterion*

	AFE	COG	DIA	HBA	RE
AFE	0.816				
COG	0.068	0.907			
DIA	0.447	0.179	0.815		
HBA	0.339	0.210	0.503	0.868	
RE	0.400	0.119	0.643	0.564	0.877

Source. The authors

Henseler et al. (2015) endorse using the Heterotrait-Monotrait ratio (HTMT) as a better solution to enhance the discriminant validity. High HTMT values represent the discriminant validity problems. Discriminant validity problems are present when HTMT values are high. The structural model conceptually has similar constructs, while the HTMT values are higher than the threshold of 0.90 (Henseler et al., 2015). Table 3 indicates that all the HTMTs of each pair of constructs are significant with values lower than the threshold of 0.85 (Franke & Sarstedt, 2019). Thus, the discriminant validity of the measurement model is guaranteed.

Table 3*Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT)*

	AFE	COG	DIA	HBA	RE
AFE					
COG	0.076				
DIA	0.533	0.206			
HBA	0.387	0.235	0.582		
RE	0.462	0.130	0.741	0.628	

Source. The authors

4.2. Structural model evaluation

Before testing the hypotheses, the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) should be evaluated to ensure no collinearity occurs when two or more indicators in a formative measurement model are highly correlated. Table 4 shows the results of inner VIF values ranging from 1.005 to 1.338, which means all the VIF values are lower than 2. Thus, collinearity is not problematic (Hair et al., 2021).

Table 4*Inner VIF Values*

	AFE	COG	DIA	HBA	RE
AFE			1.005	1.250	
COG			1.005	1.033	
DIA				1.285	1.338
HBA					1.338
RE					

Source. The authors

This study assesses the significance by evaluating P-values and 97.5% Bias-Corrected Confidence Interval (BCCI) to test the hypothesis. Table 5 shows that all the P-values of all paths are lower than 0.05. Moreover, BCCI indicates that no zero value falls into the 97.5% bias-corrected confidence interval (Streukens & Leroi-Werelds, 2016). Thus, all hypotheses (H1, H2, H3, H4, H5, H6) are supported.

Table 5*The Hypothesis Testing*

	(O)	(M)	(STDEV)	T	P	97.5% BCCI	Remark
H1: COG -> HBA	0.126	0.126	0.038	3.351	0.001	[0.050, 0.197]	Significant
H2: AFE -> HBA	0.145	0.146	0.049	2.979	0.003	[0.046, 0.238]	Significant
H3: COG -> DIA	0.150	0.152	0.036	4.130	0.000	[0.078, 0.221]	Significant
H4: AFE -> DIA	0.437	0.438	0.03	14.764	0.000	[0.374, 0.491]	Significant
H5: HBA -> RE	0.322	0.322	0.038	8.412	0.000	[0.245, 0.397]	Significant
H6: DIA -> RE	0.482	0.482	0.035	13.650	0.000	[0.407, 0.546]	Significant
H7: DIA -> HBA	0.415	0.417	0.035	11.944	0.000	[0.344, 0.480]	Significant

Note. (O) - Original Sample; (M) - Sample Mean; (STDEV) - Standard Deviation, T - T statistic, P - P values; BCCI - Bias-Corrected Confidence Interval

Source. The authors

The quality of the structural model was estimated by the cross-validated redundancy (Q^2), coefficient of determination (R^2), and effect size f^2 (Hair et al., 2014). Next, the study assesses the model's explanatory power by examining the Model's Explanatory Power (Shmueli & Koppius, 2011). Table 6 shows that the R^2 values of DIA are lower than 0.25, which indicates a weak explanatory power. Likewise, R^2 values of HBA and RE range from 0.25 to 0.5, indicating a moderate explanatory power (Hair et al., 2021).

Table 6*The Quality of the Structural Model*

Endogenous constructs	SSO	SSE	Q ²	R ²	Exogenous constructs	f ²
DIA	1912	1634.184	0.145	0.222	AFE	0.244
					COG	0.029
HBA	1912	1507.092	0.212	0.284	AFE	0.024
					COG	0.021
					DIA	0.187
BE	1912	1198.691	0.373	0.491	DIA	0.341
					HBA	0.152

Source. The authors

In terms of predicting power, Q2 results reveal the highly relevant in predicting RE to use (Q² = 0.373), HBA (Q² = 0.212), and RE (Q² = 0.145) (Hair et al., 2013). The effect size f² quantifies the substantial influence of an exogenous variable. In detail, DIA has the most significant influence over RE and HBA to use (Hair et al., 2012), while AFE has the most substantial effect on DIA.

4.3. Mediating effect evaluation

The study considers both direct and indirect effects to evaluate mediating effects (Hair et al., 2021). Table 7 shows the mediating effects of the two cases. In case 1, the direct impact of AFE -> RE is significant with P-values lower than 0.05, and no zero values fall in the 97.5% bias-corrected confidence interval. The indirect effects of AFE -> DIA -> RE and AFE -> HBA -> RE can have the same consequences. Therefore, this study can conclude that DIA and HBA mediate the path from AFE to RE. All paths' original sample sizes are positive, meaning DIA and HBA play complementary mediation in the path of AFE -> RE.

Table 7*Mediating Effect Results*

Case 1: Affective Image -> Revisit intention						
	(O)	(STDEV)	T Statistics	P Values	97.5% BCCI	
Direct effects						
AFE -> RE	0.099	0.039	2.547	0.011	[0.022, 0.174]	
Specific indirect effects						
AFE -> DIA -> RE	0.210	0.02	10.359	0.000	[0.171, 0.251]	
AFE -> HBA -> RE	0.047	0.017	2.68	0.007	[0.015, 0.083]	

Case 2: Cognitive image -> Revisit intention

	(O)	(STDEV)	T Statistics	P Values	97.5% BCCI
Direct effects					
COG -> RE	-0.034	0.033	1.051	0.293	[-0.099, 0.031]
Specific indirect effects					
COG -> DIA -> RE	0.072	0.018	4.114	0.000	[0.038, 0.107]
COG -> HBA -> RE	0.04	0.013	3.125	0.002	[0.016, 0.066]

Note. (O) - Original Sample; (STDEV) - Standard Deviation, BCCI - Bias-Corrected Confidence Interval

Source. The authors

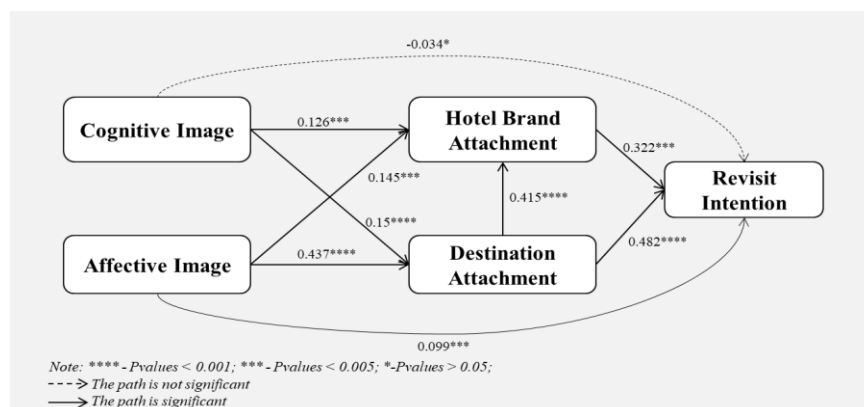
Next, Case 2 of COG -> RE is considered. In the direct effects, the P-value is not supported with the value of 0.293, higher than 0.05. Moreover, zero value falls within the 97.5% bias-corrected confidence interval [-0.099, 0.031]. Regarding indirect effects, COG -> DIA -> RE and COG -> HBA -> RE are significant with P-values lower than 0.05 and no zero number falling within a 97.5% bias-corrected confidence interval. Thus, DIA and HBA play an indirect-only mediation role in the path of COG -> RE.

5. Discussion

According to the results of the analysis, all hypotheses of the structural model are statistically supported. Thus, destination (cognitive and affective) image positively influences hotel brand attachment and destination attachment. These findings are consistent with previous research directions of earlier scholars (Jalilvand et al., 2012; Kim & Stephenkova, 2015). Similarly, hotel brand and destination attachment positively impact travellers' intention to visit. Following that, the relationships between destination attachment to revisit intention and affective image to destination attachment have the highest impact, with the effect sizes being 0.482 and 0.437, respectively. Other relationships with the levels of impact are represented in Figure 3. In the mediation effects, this study recognized that cognitive images do not correlate linearly with revisit intention. However, hotel brand and destination attachments mediate between destination image and revisit intention.

Figure 3

Structural Model Assessment Results



Source. The authors

(1) How does the traveler's perspective change after Covid-19, influencing their revisit intention? (2) To what extent does hotel brand attachment impact revisit intentions? (3) How does a change in destination image dimension adapt to a new context of HCMC?

5.1. Theoretical implications

This study has several contributions to enhance the building of theories in tourism and hospitality. Destination image dimensions have been proven appropriate in the context of Vietnam. Although this study does not contribute to exploring new dimensions for the concept of destination image, the findings solidify that the destination image has been ory maintained over many years (Baloglu & MaCleary, 1999; Beerli et al., 2002). Findings reveal that the destination image concept comprises many contexts, including Asia and Vietnam. This study also enlarges a novel research direction when combining destination and hotel brand attachment, which has been less explored in previous studies.

By utilizing the S-O-R model, once again, this study proves the role of this model in supporting the tourist's revisit intention. Since the seminal work of Mehrabian and Russell (1974), studies have often focused on emotional responses. By adapting the attachment theory, hotel and destination attachment account for the role of an organism to enhance the reaction of tourists' revisit intention.

5.2. Managerial implications

This study contributes several practical implications for firms involved in tourism and hospitality and the Vietnamese public sector to provide advice on maintaining stability and developing the tourism industry after the crisis. Covid-19 was passed, placing Vietnam tourism at risk, notably lacking destination image in the eyes of foreigners. This study indicates that travel firms should focus on creating cognitive and affective images to enhance the attachment among travellers and destination images before mentioning other services in tour packages. Once tourists have cognition and emotional attachment to a tourist attraction, they will be motivated to make a trip to return.

Moreover, hotel brands also play a vital role in motivating people to revisit. Hoteliers and hospitality managers should also create a cognitive and affective image of their hotel properties' locations. That is a good way to enhance emotional attachment to the hotel brand, influencing the ability to return. Hoteliers and travel companies should cooperate to manage the destination images from the visitor's perspective rather than focusing on entertainment quality or emotion during the trip. By emphasizing destination images in tourists' minds, the possibility of revisiting would be increased.

6. Conclusion

In conclusion, the interplay between destination image and hotel brand attachment significantly influences revisit intention, underscoring the importance of these factors for long-term success in the hospitality industry. A positive and well-maintained destination image creates an initial attraction, while a strong emotional connection to a hotel brand ensures guest loyalty and repeat visits. This relationship highlights the need for strategic collaboration between hotel operators, local authorities, and tourism stakeholders to create a cohesive experience that resonates with travelers. Investments in personalized guest services, infrastructure, and innovative marketing approaches, such as leveraging technology and emotional branding, are critical to strengthening destination appeal and

brand attachment.

Furthermore, focusing on sustainability and cultural authenticity enhances the value proposition, especially for the modern traveler seeking meaningful and responsible experiences. Managers must also prioritize post-stay engagement and continuously monitor guest feedback to adapt dynamically to changing preferences. By integrating these efforts, businesses can foster lasting relationships with their guests, driving higher satisfaction, loyalty, and advocacy.

This study also has several limitations that future researchers could address when conducting innovative studies. First, this study embraced the destination image dimension, including cognitive and affective antecedents. Further research should implement an empirical investigation to explore more dimensions to adapt to the change of the global economy. Second, this study focused only on the population in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. Future researchers can enlarge the study scale beyond one city or other regions. Lastly, the study did not explain other attributes affecting traveler behavior due to the change of global events (pandemics, economic cycle). Further research could propose the external effect attributions to cover the study's validity comprehensively.

SCIENTIFIC CONTRIBUTION

The manuscript clearly identifies a research gap; the manuscript opens new directions for further research; the manuscript proposes a new theoretical or analytical model.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

CRedit: [**Duong Bao Trung**]: Conceptualization, Methodology, Writing - Original Draft, Coding, building tools, computational work; [**Le Dinh Minh Tri**]: Writing - Review & Editing, Investigation, Formal Analysis; [**Nguyen Vuong Hoai Thao**]: Supervision, Validation, Visualization.

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All authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

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Appendix A**Table 8***Measurement Scale*

Constructs	Code	Instrument	Sources
Cognitive Image	COG1	Its climate is pleasant and cool.	Baloglu and McCleary (1999)
	COG2	There are convenient means of transportation.	
	COG3	The local people are hospitable and friendly.	
Affective Image	AFE1	This is a peaceful tourist destination.	Baloglu and McCleary (1999)
	AFE2	This is a relaxing travel destination.	
	AFE3	This is an interesting tourist destination.	
	AFE4	This is a friendly tourist destination.	
Destination Attachment	DIA1	This is a famous tourist destination in the area.	Fu et al. (2019)
	DIA2	This is a cultural tourist destination.	
	DIA3	This is a spiritual tourist destination.	
	DIA4	This is an Eco-tourism destination.	
Hotel brand attachment	HBA1	I'm passionate about staying at hotels there.	Liu, Hultman, et al. (2020)
	HBA2	I will mention the hotels when introducing them.	
	HBA3	I love the vibes of the hotels there.	
	HBA4	I will come back there because of the hotels.	
Revisit intention	RE1	Visitors will return to the destination.	Choo et al. (2016)
	RE2	Visitors will recommend others.	
	RE3	Visitors look forward to new things on their next trips.	
	RE4	Visitors will return to participate in essential activities.	

Source. The researcher's data analysis

Appendix B**Table 9***Sample Characteristic*

Demographic variables	Criteria	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	225	47.1%
	Female	244	51.0%
	Others	9	1.9%
Age	under 18	89	18.6%
	18 - 25	133	27.8%
	26 - 35	145	30.3%
	36 - 45	100	20.9%
	over 45	11	2.3%
Marital status	Single	235	49.2%
	Married	190	39.7%
	Others	53	11.1%
Education level	Under Bachelor	112	23.4%
	Bachelor	314	65.7%
	Master degree	30	6.3%
	Ph.D.	20	4.2%
	Over Ph.D.	2	0.4%
Occupation	Unemployed	56	11.7%
	Freelancer	79	16.5%
	Students	120	25.1%
	Public servant	110	23.0%
	Owner	64	13.4%
	Others	49	10.3%

Source. The researcher's data analysis

